

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 249 836

HE 017 722

AUTHOR Kautzmann, Lisette
TITLE A Model for Teaching Group Dynamics to Occupational Therapy Students.
PUB DATE 1 Jan 84
NOTE 38p.; Ed.D. practicum paper, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) --
Reports - Descriptive (141) --
Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; *Course Content; Course Descriptions; *Experiential Learning; *Group Dynamics; Higher Education; Individual Development; *Leadership Training; Models; *Occupational Therapy; Performance Contracts; Undergraduate Students

ABSTRACT

A model for teaching group dynamics to undergraduate occupational therapy students was developed. The model incorporated adult education methodology in the teaching of group leadership and personal growth. A literature review was undertaken to identify the purpose and components of laboratory education, which was recognized as the preferred method for teaching group dynamics. A modified list of components, which reflected the two major purposes of laboratory education, was used as the structural base for developing a syllabus for a one-semester course in group dynamics for occupational therapy students. The resulting syllabus was organized into the following categories: course description, course objectives, required texts, and units. Included in each unit was a statement of purpose, readings, assignments, and a sequence of activities. The three units covered group process, leadership, and applications to occupational therapy practice and closure. Opportunities for personal growth were integrated into the units. The course was designed to include opportunities for participation in adult education methods of experiential group learning. Appendices include the course syllabus, information on the learning contract, and a sample learning contract. (Author/SW)

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A MODEL FOR TEACHING GROUP DYNAMICS TO
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF ADULT EDUCATION METHODOLOGY SEMINAR

by

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MILWAUKEE BETA CLUSTER

A PRACTICUM PRESENTED TO NOVA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Author: Kautzmann, Lisette N.
Title: A Model for Teaching Group Dynamics to Occupational Therapy Students
Institution: Nova University -- Practicum Submitted for Theory and Practice of Adult Education Methodology Seminar

Skill in leading groups and understanding of group process is vital to occupational therapy practice. Occupational therapists use groups as a method to implement the treatment and education of their adult patients. The study of group dynamics is a required component of occupational therapy curricula; however, there were no models for presenting group dynamics and group leadership to occupational therapy students. The purpose of this investigation was to develop a model for teaching group dynamics to undergraduate occupational therapy students which incorporated adult education methodology in the teaching of group leadership and personal growth.

Since laboratory education experiences were recognized as the preferred method of teaching group dynamics, a literature review was used to identify the purpose and components of laboratory education. A modified list of components, which reflected the two major purposes of laboratory education, was used as the structural base for developing a syllabus for a one semester course in group dynamics for occupational therapy students. The resulting syllabus was organized into the following categories: course description, course objectives, required

texts, unit I, unit II, and unit III. Included in each unit was a statement of purpose, readings, assignments, and a sequence of activities. Understanding group process is the focus of unit I. Unit II is designed to facilitate the development of leadership. Application to occupational therapy practice and closure were addressed in unit III. Opportunities for personal growth are integrated into the three units. The course was designed to include opportunities for students to participate in adult education methods of experiential group learning to foster personal growth, development of leadership skills, and application to occupational therapy practice. Although introspection and personal growth were core components, the course was defined as an education rather than a therapeutic experience.

As a result of this investigation, occupational therapy educators have a model for an experiential course in group dynamics for undergraduate occupational therapy students. Students have an opportunity to learn adult education methodology through active participation in a laboratory education experience that can be used later as a model in occupational therapy practice. Field testing and evaluation of the model by the course instructor and students were perceived as valuable in refining the model. Dissemination of the model to occupational therapy educators was recommended. Further research to determine additional needs was suggested.

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee is a doctoral-granting, urban university and one of the thirteen universities in the University of Wisconsin system. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee was formed in 1956 with the merger of Wisconsin State College, Milwaukee and the Extension Center of The University of Wisconsin.

The mission statement of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee commits the University to maintaining high quality undergraduate and graduate programs and developing new programs designed to meet the needs of metropolitan populations. The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's schools and colleges include the School of Allied Health Professions, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, School of Business Administration, School of Education, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, School of Fine Arts, The Graduate School, College of Letters and Science, School of Library and Information Science, School of Nursing, School of Social Welfare, and the Division of Urban Outreach.

The Occupational Therapy Program is located in the School of Allied Health Professions. It is a four year program leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. After completing a two year preprofessional course of study, with a 2.5 Grade Point Average, a student is eligible to apply to the professional program. Fifty students are admitted to the professional program annually. A strong background in the natural and social sciences in the preprofessional curriculum prepares the student for advanced courses in occupational therapy

theory and practice. All courses in the professional program are required to include the interrelationship of research, theory, and practice.

Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful or goal-directed activity to facilitate the remediation or growth and development of persons who have deficits or delays in the occupational performance components of self-care, work, and leisure and the related performance components of motor skills, sensory integrative skills, cognitive skills, social interpersonal skills, and psychological intrapersonal skills (Hopkins, 1983:27-29). Mosey cites Fidler's description of purposeful activity as doing processes directed toward a planned or hypothesized end result and providing opportunities for investigating, trying out, and gaining evidence of one's capacities for experiencing, responding, managing, creating, and controlling (1981:62). Purposeful or goal-directed activity is further described in the American Occupational Therapy Association Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy (Hopkins, 1983:27).

Occupational therapy is based on the belief that purposeful activity (occupation), including its interpersonal and environmental components, may be used to prevent and mediate dysfunction, and to elicit maximum adaptation.

Skill in leading groups and understanding group process is vital to occupational therapy clinical practice, since occupational therapists use groups as a method to facilitate patient treatment and education (Mosey, 1981:107-113; Reed and Sanderson, 1980:216-217; Tiffany, 1987:291-295). Activity groups provide a degree of structure and organization which is useful to many patients. Since activity

groups involve a doing process as well as discussion, an individual has the opportunity to integrate and use performance and occupational performance skills (Mosey, 1981:108). The importance of the study of group dynamics and group leadership in the educational preparation of occupational therapists is underscored by its inclusion in the standards of an occupational therapy professional curriculum (American Occupational Therapy Association, 1983:5).

The use of experiential techniques and groups as adult education methods is well documented (Knowles, 1980:236-239; Elias and Merriam, 1980:129; Verner and Davison, 1982:30). Adult educators use these techniques to place the learner at the center of the educational process and to involve the learner in the development of goals and the design and evaluation of learning activities (Knowles, 1980:58). This approach to learning compliments the occupational therapy's commitment to the doing process and to involving adult patients in the development of treatment goals, the selection of activities to implement these goals, and in evaluating progress or lack of progress in meeting the identified goals. The use of adult education methodology in teaching group dynamics provides a format in which occupational therapy students can participate actively in the learning process and later employ in the treatment and education of adult patients.

The problem is that there are no detailed models for presenting group dynamics and group leadership to undergraduate occupational therapy students. Models described in the literature either do not include both desired components of leadership and personal growth or

were designed by psychology and counseling faculty and do not include application to occupational therapy practice. Traditional university courses in group dynamics or group counseling do not examine the use of purposeful or goal-directed activity in facilitating group interaction and personal growth.

The purpose of this investigation was to develop and describe a model for a one semester course in group dynamics for undergraduate occupational therapy students which incorporated adult education methodology in the teaching of group leadership, personal growth, and application to occupational therapy practice. A literature review was used to identify the purpose and components of laboratory education. These served as the structural base for the course syllabus. Course objectives and techniques to implement and evaluate the learning objectives were presented.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The value of including the study of group dynamics in undergraduate occupational therapy curricula was documented by Posthuma (1971). Several approaches to teaching group process have been described in the occupational therapy literature. Conte and Waggoner used a seminar-discussion group to train students for early involvement in professional roles (1970). Delworth, a psychologist, used the National Training Laboratory model in a 12 hour experience with occupational therapy students to facilitate development of interpersonal and communication skills (1972). Posthuma described the goals of a required course in personal growth as enhancing personal development and providing students with an opportunity to examine their roles as

emerging therapists (1972). Maynard and Pedro discussed their use of a one day experience in group dynamics to help occupational therapy assistant students increase awareness of their interactions and impact on others (1971). Wise and Page used a group process course to identify, examine, and demonstrate factors that facilitate or hinder small group functioning in occupational therapy practice (1980).

All of the described approaches to teaching group dynamics to occupational therapy students used methods and techniques advocated by adult educators. Knowles indicates that effective teaching of adults requires a shift from educational techniques which focus on the transmission of knowledge to more participatory, experiential techniques such as group discussion, the case method, the critical incident process, simulation exercises, role playing, skill practice exercises, field projects, action projects, and laboratory methods (1980:50). Verner identified three methods of learning as individual, group, and community (1964:68-69). In his discussion of adult learning, Verner states that group learning is more effective than individual learning and suggests that group participation techniques are more effective than those techniques which focus on the adult as an individual, isolated unit (1982:30). In the Study Guide for the Nova University course The Theory and Practice of Adult Education Methodology, Knowles cites Verner's definition of techniques as the ways in which learning is facilitated (1980:2-3). Knowles organizes group learning techniques into the following typology: presentation techniques; audience participation techniques for large meetings;

discussion techniques; simulation techniques; T-groups; non-verbal exercises; and skill-practice exercises, drill, and coaching (1980:239).

In reviewing the development of group dynamics theory, Kurt Lewin is recognized as the major influence in this area of social psychology (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:12; Yalom, 1975:459). Lewin emphasized the importance of applying existing knowledge to the training of leaders and group members in order to promote functioning of democratic groups. He was concerned with building bridges and interrelationships between social theory and social action. Lewin's investigations were the first scientific studies of group dynamics and were instrumental in developing new techniques for studying the interdependence between the individual and the group. Lewin believed that the individual's group was the ground for his or her perceptions, feelings, and actions (Allport, 1948:vii). With his associates, Lewin conducted studies of group discussion, group productivity, attitude change, and leadership. Lewin's research emphasized the importance of active participation or experiential learning in groups as a means of learning new skills, developing new attitudes, and obtaining new knowledge of group function. His findings demonstrated that learning is effective when members are encouraged to interact and reflect on their mutual experience (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:16). Lewin believed that behavior and attitudes could be changed only when individuals were able to examine them personally and conclude that they were unsatisfactory. According to Lewin, methods of changing attitudes or retraining are effective only if trainees are provided with opportunities for discovering the adverse effects of their

behavior on themselves and others. Thus, trainees must be helped to see themselves as others see them (Yalom, 1975:461-462).

Review of Related Literature

Yalom traced the development of the T-group or laboratory training experience (1975:462-466). The T-group emerged as a result of Lewin's 1946 work with the Connecticut Interracial Commission in training leaders to manage intergroup tension. In the original design of the group experience, Lewin and a team of social psychologists led small group discussions which analyzed back-home problems that were presented by group members. A research observer was assigned to each group to record behavior and interactions. When the group discussion was over the group leaders and the research observers met to discuss observations of leader and member behavior. Group members requested to be included in the discussion and the resulting interaction led to recognition that discussion of group process or experiential learning was equally beneficial in promoting growth and change as the problem analysis or content portion of the group discussion. Group members learned about their interpersonal styles, the response of others to them, and group development from studying group process and being confronted with observations of their behavior and its effect on others. Lewin identified the two major characteristics of a T-group as a research attitude on the part of the leader in which s/he and the members are collaborators in a research inquiry designed to enable the participants to experience, understand, and change their behavior, and it is a method of education.

Early T-groups had many functions including exploration and development of group dynamics theory, a forum for discussing back-home problems, development of leadership skills, and assisting in the transfer of T-group learning to back-home situations. It became evident that there was a need to eliminate the diverse purposes of the T-group and concentrate on core functions as well as maintaining the group focus as an educational rather than a therapeutic experience. Exercises and groups were developed to manage the cognitive and transfer of learning functions, allowing the T-group to emphasize the here and now of interpersonal behavior using feedback, interpersonal honesty, self-disclosure, unfreezing, and observant participation. Cognitive aids, structured experiences, lectures, reading assignments, and theory sessions were used to enhance the discussion and feedback. Two major purposes of T-groups emerged from this transition:

1. group dynamics in which participants learn about group development and leadership; and,
2. personal learning in which participants learn about interpersonal style and communication.

Pfeiffer and Jones (1973:187-192) identify the components of laboratory education experiences for personal growth and leadership development. They suggest that designing laboratory experiences involves the development of a sequence of related, goal-directed learning experiences. According to Pfeiffer and Jones, the major goals of personal growth experiences are to develop awareness of self and others and to increase skills in interpersonal relationships.

Leadership training goals include fostering leadership skill building and developing a set of leadership concepts. The authors suggest the following sequence of learning activities for a personal growth laboratory experience; getting acquainted activities; closing expectation gaps; legitimizing risk taking; learning about feedback; developing an awareness of process; integrating conceptual models of personal and group development; experimenting with self-expression; planning back-home application; assisting re-entry or closure. A similar list is proposed for leadership development laboratory experiences in which integrate models of personal and group development and experimenting with self-expression are replaced with roles and shared leadership and competition, collaboration, and consensus tasks. Pfeiffer and Jones advocate adapting the sequence and related activities to meet the needs of the client system.

Laboratory education experiences in personal growth and leadership development are the preferred methods of learning about group dynamics (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:7-25). Experiential learning is the basis for laboratory education experiences. Experiential exercises are structured to allow individuals to experiment with their behavior and to grow and change. Experiential learning alters persons' cognitive structures, modifies their attitudes, and expands their repertoire of behavioral skills (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:17).

Summary

Since occupational therapists use groups as a method of implementing patient treatment and education, group dynamics is

an integral part of occupational therapy curricula. Documented approaches to teaching group dynamics to undergraduate occupational therapy students were described and the use of adult education experiential methodology in the course offerings was noted. Experiential learning methods and techniques to facilitate adult learning were defined. The work of Lewin in the development of the field of group dynamics and laboratory education was presented. The purpose and components of laboratory education experiences were identified through a literature review.

Occupational therapists actively involve their adult patients in the therapy process through the use of purposeful or goal-directed activities. This orientation parallels the adult educator's commitment to placing the learner at the center of the learning process through the use of experiential learning methods and techniques. The inclusion of adult education methodology in the design of the model for teaching group dynamics provides University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee occupational therapy students with a learning experience which can enhance personal growth and leadership skills and serve as a model for future practice with adult clients. Since the model was described in detail, it can be used as a reference for other undergraduate curricula.

PROCEDURES

Since laboratory education experiences in personal growth and leadership development are recognized as the preferred methods of learning about group dynamics, a literature review was used to identify

the purpose and components of laboratory education experiences. Pfeiffer and Jones' list of components (1973:188-192) was modified to include learning activities to facilitate both personal growth and leadership development. The finalized list of components was used as the structural foundation for developing a course syllabus for teaching group dynamics to undergraduate occupational therapy students.

Limitations

This study is limited to the development of a model to present introductory information about group dynamics. It is intended to be a specific model for occupational therapy rather than a generic model for health care professionals, since the occupational therapy focus on purposeful activity and its application to a disabled population is incorporated into the model design.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the student will have completed introductory courses in the natural and social sciences, occupational therapy theory and media, human development, and will have an understanding of general health and disease concepts. It is further assumed that the instructor is an occupational therapist who has appropriate education and training for teaching the class. It also is assumed that the class will be conducted according to the ethical principles proposed by Johnson and Johnson (1982:468-471) and Corey and Corey (1982:32-60).

Definition of Terms

The following terms were used in this study:

Activity is a specific action, function, or sphere of action that involves learning or doing by direct experience (Reed and Sander-son, 1980:233).

Content in group dynamics refers to the topic being discussed (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:25).

Experiential learning techniques are those techniques which directly involve the learner as an active participant in the learning process (Knowles, 1980:50).

Feedback is the provision of constructive information to another person regarding their behavior (Johnson, 1981:22-23).

Group dynamics is the area of social psychology that focuses on advancing knowledge about the nature of group life (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:7).

Laboratory groups are groups organized for the purpose of analyzing group behavior, experimenting with new behavior, and sharing feedback regarding the effects of various behaviors (Knowles, 1980:236).

Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful or goal-directed activity in the remediation or growth and development of persons who have deficits or delays in the occupational performance areas of self-care, work, or leisure and their related performance components of motor skills, sensory integrative skills, cognitive skills, social interpersonal skills and psychological intrapersonal skills.

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program is a two year, associate degree program.

Occupational Therapy Professional Program is a program that leads to a baccalaureate degree.

Process in group dynamics is how the group is functioning including leadership, group member roles, decision making style, communication, and controversy (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:25).

RESULTS

A modification of Pfeiffer and Jones' (1973:188-192) list of components for laboratory education experiences, which reflected the two major purposes of laboratory education, was used to develop a syllabus for a one semester course in group dynamics for undergraduate occupational therapy students (see Appendix A). The modified list of components included: getting acquainted, closing expectation gaps, legitimizing risk-taking, learning about feedback, developing an awareness of process, experimenting with self-expression, roles and shared leadership, competition, cooperation, and consensus tasks, application to occupational therapy practice, and closure.

The course syllabus was organized into the following categories: course description, course objectives, required texts, unit I, unit II, and unit III. Each unit included a statement of purpose, readings, assignments, and sequence of activities. The first five components, getting acquainted, closing expectation gaps, legitimizing risk-taking, and learning about feedback, provided the basis for the learning experiences in unit I. Opportunities for experimenting with self-expression were incorporated into all three units. Unit II focused on learning experiences related to the leadership development

components of roles and shared leadership and competition, collaboration, and consensus tasks. Application to occupational therapy practice and closure were addressed in unit III.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were three major concerns in developing a model to teach group dynamics to occupational therapy students. The first concern was that the course would be designed as a laboratory educational experience in which the students would have opportunities to participate in the adult education methods of experiential group learning. The second concern was that the course include both of the identified purposes of laboratory education, personal growth and leadership development, as well as application to occupational therapy practice. The third concern was that although introspection and personal growth were core components, the course clearly would be defined as an educational experience and conducted in an ethical manner. These concerns were addressed in the course description and the course objectives (see Appendix A) and the Personal Code of Ethics Contract (see Appendix B).

There were two required texts. Corey and Corey (1982) contained information on group process, techniques for facilitating groups, stages of group development, setting group goals and norms, and ethical considerations. Johnson and Johnson (1982) provided information on theory and research in group dynamics, ethical practice, contracts, leadership roles and skills, and theory and structured experiences in competition, collaboration, and consensus tasks. These texts were

supplemented with additional materials related to the facilitation of specific learning activities.

The sequence of activities for the three learning units reflected the modified list of Pfeiffer and Jones' suggested components for laboratory education experiences (1973:188-192). Activities in unit I are planned and organized by the course instructor. Getting acquainted is accomplished through ice-breakers (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1974:3) and new games (Fluegelman, 1976:69). Individual contracts (see Appendix C) and goal setting serve to close expectation gaps and give both the student and the course instructor an understanding of mutual expectations. Legitimizing risk-taking is addressed in the mutual development of group norms, the adoption of a statement of ethics (see Appendix B), and trust exercises (Johnson, 1981:67-69). Learning about feedback is part of the self-disclosure and feedback exercises (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1972:88; Johnson, 1981:41-42). Opportunities for self-disclosure are initiated in unit I and continued throughout the course. Understanding of group process also is a continuing process, beginning in unit I through involvement in the content and process segments of the laboratory group and the written self-analysis of participation in group process. Developing an understanding of leadership roles, shared leadership, and competitive, cooperative, and consensus tasks is accomplished in unit II. Students self-assign themselves to groups and select structured experiences in competitive, collaborative, and consensus tasks from Johnson and Johnson (1982:85-134; 179-224; 227-277; 335-369) to present to the group. In both units II and III, student

leaders ask for feedback from other students and receive feedback from the course instructor immediately after class, using a mutually designed evaluation instrument. This also is an opportunity for questions and discussion of alternative action. Application of knowledge about planning, organizing, and implementing group activities to occupational therapy practice is the purpose of unit III. Topics for experiential and written group activities are generated through the nominal group process (Filey, 1975:113). Students self-assign themselves to topic areas. Closure activities are determined by the group using references from Corey et al. (1982:143-161) and Pfeiffer and Jones (1974:49; 1976: 17-18). Criteria for evaluating the experiential and written activities are mutually developed and agreement is reached by consensus. The course is congruent with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Occupational Therapy Program curriculum focus on the interrelationship of research, theory and practice.

As a result of this investigation, occupational therapy educators have a model for an experiential course in group dynamics for undergraduate students. Students completing the course have increased knowledge and skill in the use of adult education methodology in facilitating personal growth and leadership development. This information should make a positive contribution to their preparation for clinical practice.

It is recommended that the model be field tested in the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Occupational Therapy Program. Instructor and student response should be sought and the findings used to support or modify the model. Dissemination of the model to

occupational therapy educators is recommended and further research to determine additional needs is suggested.

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APPENDIX A.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to involve the learner in an experiential study of group dynamics including: personal growth experiences to develop awareness of self and others and increase skills in interpersonal relationships; leadership training experiences to foster leadership skill building and the development of leadership concepts; and, application of this information to occupational therapy practice. Learning will be facilitated through experiential learning techniques, group discussion, and related readings.

Course Objectives

After completing this course the learner will have demonstrated:

1. familiarity with group dynamics research and theory;
2. a heightened awareness of self and others;
3. skill in self-disclosure;
4. skill in giving and getting constructive feedback;
5. the ability to analyze group process;
6. an understanding of ethical practice in group facilitation;
7. skill in planning, developing, and facilitating group activities;
8. skill in participating in group experiences, contributing to the achievement of group tasks and maintaining group structure; and,

9. an understanding of a variety of activities and techniques and how to use them to facilitate occupational therapy programs.

Required Texts

- Corey, Gerald & Marianne Schneider Corey. Groups: Process and Practice. 2nd. rev. ed. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1982.
- Johnson, David W. & Frank P. Johnson. Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills; 2nd. ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982.

UNIT I

The purpose of this unit is to demonstrate the organization of a group. After completing this experience, the learner will have participated in:

1. the setting of group goals;
2. the development of group norms;
3. the establishment of an ethical frame of reference for the group;
4. the development of a contract with identified goals for individual growth through self-disclosure and feedback; and
5. a written self-assessment of participation in the group process.

Readings

- Corey & Corey, Chapters 1-5
- Johnson and Johnson, Chapters 1; 11 pp. 421-428; Appendix B, Ethics of Experiential Learning.

Assignments

Learners are expected to:

1. complete the assigned readings;
2. attend and participate in the group sessions;
3. keep a journal of each class session including:
 - a. what concepts or ideas did you gain from the readings that helped you understand what happened today?
(include references)
 - b. What happened that you felt strongly about? What did you do?
 - c. Where was the leadership in this group session? What leadership are you providing?
 - d. If you could relive this session, what would you do differently?

The journal will be handed in at the end of the unit; and,

4. prepare a brief, written assessment of your impressions of each person as a group member. These are due at the end of the unit and will be shared in class.

Sequence of Activities

1. Ice-breakers
2. Trust
3. Self-disclosure
4. Feedback

UNIT II

The purpose of this unit is to demonstrate group process, provide opportunities to experience leadership roles and shared leadership, and experience competitive, collaborative, and consensus tasks. After completing this unit the learner will have participated in:

1. experiential exercises in communication, decision making, controversy and creativity, and power;
2. giving and getting feedback through discussion and analysis of the content and process of each group exercise;
3. planning, developing, and facilitating goal-directed group activities; and,
4. a written, self-assessment of participation in the group process.

Readings

Corey & Corey, Chapter 6

Johnson & Johnson, Chapters 3, 4, 6, 8

Assignments

Learners are expected to:

1. complete the assigned readings;
2. attend and participate in the group sessions;
3. participate in the planning, developing and facilitating of one leadership activity;

4. keep a journal at mid-point and at the end of the unit including:
 - a. How am I using the class to meet my personal (contracted) goals?
 - b. What changes or progress have I made in meeting these goals?
 - c. What changes or progress would I like to make?
 - d. What else do I need to do?
5. prepare a brief, written assessment of your impression of each person as a group member. These are due at the end of the unit and will be shared in class.

Sequence of Activities

1. Information sharing
2. Communication
3. Decision making
4. Creative problem solving
5. Controversy and creativity
6. Power

UNIT III

The purpose of this unit is to provide experience in applying group leadership skills to the facilitation of occupational therapy groups and in closure. After completing this unit the learner will have participated in:

1. planning, developing, and facilitating occupational therapy group activities and closure activities;
2. a membership role in a variety of experiential occupational therapy group activities;
3. a discussion and analysis of group process and content for each group activity; and,
4. a written self-assessment of participation in the group process.

Readings

Corey & Corey, Chapters 7-8

Assignments

Learners are expected to:

1. participate in the planning, developing, and facilitation of two group and one closure sessions;
2. attend and participate in the group sessions;
3. complete a final written project in the application of goal-directed group activities to a disabled population (criteria and format to be discussed);
4. complete a summative evaluation of personal learning and growth (criteria and format to be discussed); and,
5. prepare a brief assessment of your impressions of each person as a group member (format and date to be discussed).

APPENDIX B.

THE CONTRACT: INFORMED CONSENT AND MUTUAL AGREEMENT

1. The coordinator's intentions and objectives should be clearly communicated to the participants. The participants should understand that they are going to participate in an experiential exercise in which they will be expected to examine their own behavior and the behavior of others, and analyze the behaviors for purposes of learning.
2. The nature of the contract should be easily understood by the coordinator and the participants. The number of experiences, the length of each session, and the appropriateness and the objectives of each exercise should be agreed on.
3. The point at which the contract is terminated should be clear to both the coordinator and the participants.

THE ACTIVITIES

1. The participants' freedom of choice should be respected. Participation should be voluntary. A participant's freedom to choose whether or not to become involved in an exercise or part of an exercise should be respected. This freedom includes advising the participants on how they can say "no" to the instructions of the coordinator.
2. The coordinator should have an explicit reason for conducting the exercise and be prepared to state it publicly.
3. Only exercises the coordinator is competent to direct should be conducted. If the coordinator lacks certification and competence in psychotherapy, for example, exercises aimed at exposing deep psychodynamics of participants should not be held (and there are no such exercises in this book).
4. The coordinator should present relevant theory and research when it is appropriate to the participants' learning and increased effectiveness.
5. The coordinator should be constantly aware of his behavior styles and personal needs, and deal with them productively in the performance of his role. He should also be aware of the impact of his needs and style on the participants.
6. The coordinator should assess all experiences by discussing the participants' feelings and reactions to them and by asking the participants what can be learned from the experiences. Adequate time must be programmed into the design of the session for this purpose.
7. The coordinator should not initiate confrontations between participants, which may damage their future relationship. This does not mean that coordinators should discourage risk taking in giving feedback, the making of honest disclosures, or attempts to face conflicts and improve the relationship. It simply means that confrontations should originate with the participants, not the coordinator.
8. If any personal information is revealed, the coordinator should make sure that the possibility of it being used in any way to damage the participants is minimized.

9. Ideally, the coordinator should be able to recognize symptoms of serious psychological stress and be able to make responsible decisions when such problems arise. At the very least, the coordinator should know where emergency psychological services are available.
10. Sessions should be evaluated in such a way that the coordinator receives feedback that will improve her performance. The sessions should be open to scrutiny by competent professionals interested in the effectiveness of experiential learning.
11. Follow-up interviews with the participants should be made possible so that the impact of the sessions on them can be assessed and their feelings and reactions to the sessions discussed.

THE COORDINATOR'S KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND NEEDS

1. What the coordinator does needs to be based on empirically validated knowledge. Folklore, superstition, common sense, fads, popular gimmicks, and personal experiences are not adequate bases for teaching others. The coordinator should thoroughly understand the principles of experiential learning, the steps of skill development, and the knowledge that the exercise is designed to teach.
2. In addition to knowledge, the coordinator should have some experience in conducting exercises and some skills in helping participants reflect on their behavior, and that of others and learn from it. Knowing the steps of experiential learning is not enough: the coordinator should also have some skills and competencies in applying the principles of experiential learning.
3. At any time during the exercises the coordinator should be able to explain the theory she is operating by and the way in which current activities relate to the theory. This does not mean that the coordinator will not use her intuition and impulses when conducting an exercise, but she should be able to reconstruct the theory behind her intuitive actions.
4. The coordinator should be aware of his behavior style and personal needs and deal with them productively in the performance of the teaching role. He should also be aware of the impact of his personal needs and styles on the participants. (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:468-470)

APPENDIX C.

LEARNING CONTRACT (Johnson and Johnson, 1982:32-33)

Before beginning the next chapter, we would like to propose a learning contract. The contract is as follows:

I understand that I will be taking an experiential approach to learning about the social psychology of groups and to developing the skills needed to function effectively in groups. I willingly commit myself to the statements hereunder:

1. I will use the structured experiences in this book to learn from. This means I am willing to engage in specified behaviors, seek out feedback about the impact of my behavior on others, and analyze my interpersonal interactions with other class members in order to make the most of my learning.
2. I will make the most of my own learning by (a) engaging in specified behaviors and in being open about my feelings and reactions to what is taking place in order that others may have information to react to in giving me feedback and in building conclusions about the area of study, (b) setting personal learning goals that I will work actively to accomplish—which means that I will take responsibility for my own learning and not wait around for someone else to “make me grow,” (c) being willing to experiment with new behavior and to practice new skills, (d) seeking out and being receptive to feedback, and (e) building conclusions about the experiences highlighted in the exercises.
3. I will help others make the most of their learning by: (a) providing feedback in constructive ways, (b) helping to build the conditions (such as openness, trust, acceptance, and support) under which others can experiment and take risks with their behavior, and (c) contributing to the formulation of conclusions about the experiences highlighted in the exercises.
4. I will use professional judgment in keeping what happens among group members in the exercises appropriately confidential.

Signed: _____